

From the Committee of the Meeting for Sufferings in London,
appointed to correspond with Friends in Foreign Parts.

To the Members of our Religious Society & others professing with us, or
educated in our principles resident in the Australian Colonies.

Dear Friends and fellow Professors,

Our Meeting for Sufferings has on several previous occasions, addressed the Members of our Religious Society scattered abroad, more particularly those in the Australian Colonies of the British Empire. The altered circumstances of the Colonies and especially of South Australia & New South Wales, from the discovery of the Gold Fields, and the consequent tide of Emigration which during the past year has flowed from this Country into those Settlements, have awakened in our minds a fresh and, in some respects, a peculiar concern for our friends who may be resident there; — a concern which we wish thus to manifest to you individually.

Tho' the number of this class who are located in the immediate neighbourhood of the Gold Regions, may not be large, yet many of you are, we cannot doubt, brought into contact with the new state of the population, occasioned by the opening of this fresh field of labour and of gain. We feel much for you in the varied temptations incident to such a condition of things. Some may have left their native Country with the simple desire "to provide things honest in the sight of all men" others may have been allured by inferior motives, but under whatever circumstances you may find yourselves strangers in a strange land, we desire that none of you of either class, may be discouraged from aiming to walk consistently with our Christian Profession and that in no circumstances any approach to indifference or recklessness of character or conduct, may be given way to. The sterling integrity, the unsullied purity, and the humble piety of the true Christian, may, we believe, thro' the help of Divine grace, be as fully maintained in the most exposed, as in the most sheltered situations of life. Yet we cannot forget the nonaring tendency of evil example, of a lower standard of morals, and if frequent intercourse with men in whose hearts there is not the fear of God. In districts too, in which violence and rapine are but imperfectly repressed by the Civil Magistrate, the temptations may be strong.

to let fall our Christian testimony to the peaceable nature of the Gospel, and to the unlawfulness of all violence, even in self defence.

When we contemplate our dear friends exposed to such trials and temptations, we are ready to say "Who is sufficient for these things?" But we remember that in this as well as in every other circumstance of life, "our sufficiency is of God", and of Him alone. And we desire that, when you may feel yourselves most deprived of the protection and help of faithful and experienced brethren, you may be encouraged to look with confidence to that gracious Being who is able & willing, in every time of need to help those who put their trust in Him. May you, under a sense of your danger but in reliance in his Holy aid, resist the first allurements from the path of rectitude and purity, shun all evil company, & remember the comprehensive import of the precept "My Son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

Give heed we entreat you to those convictions of the Holy Spirit for sin, and those heart tendering visitations of the love of God to your souls to which your attention has been turned even from early life, and with which, we doubt not, you continue to be from time to time mercifully favored. With Christian boldness dare to walk consistently with the principles of your profession in all things, even tho' such a course will necessarily make you singular among those who may be living in violation of the Divine law. If your heart be ready to faint, under a sense of the evil which surrounds you and the apprehension that no man careth for your soul, we sympathize with you in such a condition of mind, but we would encourage you to look up unto that merciful Saviour who died for you & who ever liveth to intercede for and to succour you. He is as near as breath. ~~He is as near as breath~~ You in your remotest and solitary abode, as when you dwell among your brethren and friends and were surrounded, it may be, with all the advantages of outward religious fellowship. His grace is sufficient for you, and his strength, as it is sought in faith, will be made perfect in your weakness.

We doubt not that in what is passing around you in many places you will see striking evidences of the truth of the Scripture language that "the love of money is the root of all evil." We affectionately desire that you may be on your guard against this love, not only in its grosser forms but also in its more refined & seductive

influences. May the love of Christ so rule in your hearts as to keep them clean from this and every other defilement, and lead you to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" and to set your affections on things above."

Where you may stand almost or entirely alone as Friends, in a district, there is danger lest the performance of the great duty of Divine worship be neglected or possibly omitted altogether, or if this be not the case, performed in a manner inconsistent with your own early convictions and the Christian principles in which you have been educated. Yet allow us to remind you that if the first and great commandment be lost sight of you can neither hope to be enabled to fulfil the rest, nor can you, with filial confidence look up to our Heavenly Father, and venture to ask His blessing on your outward concerns in life, or his protection from the snares of the Devil. We would warmly encourage you, not to omit sitting down together, even though very few in number for the performance of religious worship after the simple manner of Friends, at a stated hour both on the First Day and once in the course of the week. Even when alone, we are persuaded it is right thus to endeavour to "draw nigh unto God" and what a blessing is conveyed in the annexed promise "He will draw nigh unto you."

You know, dear Friends, how often retirement before the Lord, self examination, watchfulness and prayer have been commended to our members. It is in some fresh sense of the value of these duties, that we would invite you to the diligent practice of them. We doubt not that the possession of the Holy Scriptures will often be felt by you to be an especial privilege and earnestly would entreat you frequently to read them with humble & sincere desires that they may be viewed to your souls. In how many instances has the sincere Christian when deprived of all other outward means of spiritual help, experienced them thus to be applied to his warning, instruction, & comfort.

In conclusion we beseech you to accept this letter in love, in that love in which we feel that it is offered, a love which seeks your happiness in time & in eternity.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,
Josiah Foxster, Clerk.
London, 7th of 2nd month, 1853.